

I've done the best I could to turn this country around and to get us moving in the right direction. But the best is still out there. That's what I want you to believe. And forget about me being President; as a citizen, I have waited 35 years for my country again to be in the position to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And it is a so much more interesting country now because so many of you are here. And the world is more interesting, and the potential is so great. But whether we seize it depends upon whether we understand what the issue is about, whether we work and vote, and whether people like Cynthia are in the United States Congress.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Saeid and Sudabeh Sadri; Gov. Roy Barnes of Georgia and his wife, Marie; Mayor Bill Campbell of Atlanta; State Representatives Tyrone Brooks, Calvin Smyre, and J. E. (Billy) McKinney; State Senators Gloria S. Butler and Robert Brown; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and NBA Atlanta Hawk Dikembe Mutombo.

Statement on Proposals To Reopen Trade in Elephant Ivory and Whale Products

April 14, 2000

I am deeply concerned that successful efforts by the international community to protect endangered species would be undermined by proposals to reopen trade in elephant ivory and whale products. We will oppose these proposals and urge other nations currently meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, to maintain current trade restrictions. I am proud of the fact that the United States has been a worldwide leader in the protection of elephants and whales. We will continue our work with international partners to protect these magnificent animals.

Statement on Signing Legislation Designating the Joseph Iletto Post Office

April 14, 2000

Today I signed legislation designating the United States Post Office located at 14701 Peyton Drive in Chino Hills, California, as the "Joseph Iletto Post Office." Joseph Iletto was a Filipino-American postal worker who was tragically murdered last year in a crime of hate. He was a dedicated public servant, killed simply because he was an Asian-American who worked for his country's Government. It is a fitting tribute to the life and memory of Mr. Iletto that we name this Post Office in his honor.

During the last year, we have all been shaken by violent acts like the murder of Joseph Iletto, acts that strike at the very values that define us as a nation. Now is the time for us to take strong and decisive action to fight hate crimes, and I call on Congress, at long last, to pass strong hate crimes legislation. It is time for us all to raise our voices against intolerance and to build the one America that our hearts tell us we can be.

NOTE: H.R. 3189, approved April 14, was assigned Public Law No. 106-184.

Statement on Russian State Duma Action on the START II Treaty

April 14, 2000

I am very pleased that the Russian State Duma today approved the START II Treaty—a critical step toward the treaty's entering into force. This action builds on decades of cooperation between the United States and Russia to reduce nuclear arms and clearly advances the interests of both countries. Together with the START I Treaty, it will result in a two-thirds reduction in the strategic nuclear weapons that the Soviet Union and the United States maintained at the height of the cold war. START II will make our people safer and our partnership with a democratic Russia stronger. It will open the